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THE MIND OF THE LATIN-AMERICAN NATIONS

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Before starting the reading of this paper I wish to make it known that I come here to express my personal views on matters referring to the South American nations and not as a representative of any institution and having no authority to speak in behalf of my government.

This paper, which has been prepared at short notice, will deal especially with the influence of the United States and the European powers upon the development of this group of republics which I call the Latin-American nation. I have entitled this paper "The Mind of the Latin-American Nation" because my purpose is to deal especially with the foreign influence on the making up of the Latin-American soul and not with the development of our industries or the exploitation of our natural resources by foreign enterprise and capital.

Whenever I make my statements of a general character, I wish it to be understood that I am doing so by inductive logic because I think that many of the problems that affect my own nation are common problems affecting the life of all the Latin-American countries. I am considering the nations as having a mind, a mind of a complex constitution if you wish, but to which more or less the same laws that govern the human mind can be applied. We often hear of persons acting under the influence of suggestions, or auto-suggestions, and I think that nations often act under such influences, disobeying many times the dictates of justice. A prominent writer on psychology has said: "The subjective mind is constantly controllable and controlled by suggestions coming either from without or from within." This statement applies equally as well to nations. It is the influence upon

the mind of the Latin-American nation coming from without that I wish to review.

In the first place let me recite a few historical facts and make known, in justice to the United States, what this country did at the birth of our republics and the influence of those facts upon our succeeding life. When Napoleon fell, who was, as somebody said "The crowned people," and when Russia, Austria and Prussia organized the Holy Alliance, Spain asked for its support in order to subject the insurgent colonies of South America. The United States, with the backing of Minister Channing of England, exposed to the world the plans of that backward and oppressing alliance and recognized the independence of the new republics, soon after the proclamation of our own independence in 1818. Once reestablished the despotic government of Ferdinand VII, Spain renewed her attempts to regain control of the Latin-American republics. The United States proclaimed the Monroe Doctrine, which was then our protecting shield and moral support against the ambitions of the European monarchies. Since that time the Union has been sending us elements of defense, elements of intellectuality and of material development. As years go by, we find, however, that the beneficial influence that the United States had at the beginning of our independent life, is overshadowed by the moral influence of the continental powers. However, we had enough impulse given to us, by the example of this great Union, to enable us to keep alive our democratic institutions, which today are endangered by the influence of the European monarchies, which has created and maintain an undesirable aristocracy in the heart of our apparent democratic institutions.

It would be hard to make laws dealing with the moral influence of a nation upon another and the development of trade between them. Today, we could not say, for instance, whether moral influence brings trade, or whether trade brings moral influence. The fact is, however, that during this period of moral influence of the United States upon Chile the trade relations between the two countries were most encouraging and satisfactory. It was during that period

that American enterprise had the most flourishing start in South America. During that period Wheelwright, an American, established the first steamship line in the Pacific connecting Chile directly with this country. The same man started the exploitation of our coalmines and nailed the first nails of the first South American railroad, between Copiapó and Caldera. Meiggs, an American civil engineer, soon after connected by railroad our capital city and our main port, Valparaiso. Even during our fight for freedom, we saw American spirit and American enterprise coming to our assistance. As early as 1811 Arnold Heber brought to Chile the first printing press, which we keep, today, as a sacred relic in our national museum in Santiago. I can rightly say, therefore, that Americans were the founders of the national press in Chile. A few years later we find another American who, associated with a Chilean, founded one of the oldest and most important papers published in Latin America, *El Mercurio*.

I have mentioned the fact of the press being founded by American citizens and the fact that this press was therefore highly saturated with American ideas and ideals, because I think that this "Fourth Power of the State" was then largely responsible for the friendly attitude of Chile towards the United States in the early period of its life. The press is certainly a power and whether directed for good or evil its influence upon the minds of the people cannot be denied. It is a common belief that yellow journalism in this country precipitated the Spanish American war. It is also a common statement that it was a selfish and prejudicial idea which animated the yellow press. Recent disclosures made in connection with the proceedings against the Krupp interests in Germany have revealed to the world that this same selfish motive animated the larger part of the press of both Germany and France, in order to keep alive the ill-feeling and differences between the two nations. In this case, this most shameful campaign conducted through the columns of the press had no other purpose than to promote and increase the purchase of armaments by the two countries mentioned. This very same scheme was tried and carried nearly to successful completion between two South Amer-

ican republics. It is not long ago that two sister nations, which always had the same ideals, the same abundance of resources, the same pursuits, were brought to the verge of a war. Again, it was the influence of European armament manufacturers which impressed the minds of these two nations to make them think that their trivial differences could not be settled without resorting to arms. It took the patriotism and courage of highly spirited citizens of both countries to bring out the truth and wake us up from this dreadful nightmare. That we were only acting under foreign influence is proven by the fact that we settled the affair in a most peaceful manner and the friendliness of the two nations was strengthened by closer ties. As a final chapter to the incident, we erected on the peak of the Andes a monument to the Great Master, as an expression of thanks to providence for having liberated us from the very undesirable influence of these European gun manufacturers. The differences between the two nations were then settled forever and I am proud to say today that no other two nations in the world are coöperating, and will coöperate in the future, more efficiently towards the welfare of mankind than Argentine and Chile.

The satisfactory solution of the problem of Argentine and Chile has left to my knowledge five international questions to be settled in South America.

Let me briefly review these differences, because I think that their statement and their acknowledgment will be a factor in their solution. Furthermore, I have too high an estimation of the good sense of the Latin-American republics to think that any of these problems will ever produce an armed conflict. But instead the promotion of commercial intercourse between these nations will entirely do away with these differences and bring permanent and satisfactory conditions. Ex-President Taft very well expressed it: "Trade is peace." I also think that the absolute elimination of the Monroe doctrine will very much tend towards the promotion of a strong union among the South American republics.

As I have stated before, this doctrine has been of great

value to the Latin-American nations, because at a time they were unable to defend themselves against the attacks of foreign powers. This inability of ours to resist the attacks of foreign nations was then largely due to our lack of the spirit of coöperation, a fact well known and characteristic to the Latin races. A fact that is now preventing, in South America, the organization of large political parties. I am pleased to say, however, that we are getting over these drawbacks and that our admiration for the wonderful progress of this country is making us realize that to attain similar progress we need to develop the spirit of coöperation.

But this is a little digression.

In saying that the absolute elimination of the Monroe Doctrine will help very much towards the promotion of a strong union in the South American republics I meant to say that by leaving Latin America absolutely free from this now only apparent protecting shield of the doctrine already mentioned, it will further bring out the need of a Pan-American Union. Let me now briefly state what I consider the most interesting international problems in South America today. As I have said, my idea is that their impartial exposition will be a factor in their solution. As I am a Chilean, and realizing that as such the impartiality of my utterances would be doubted, I will leave out the statement of the differences between Peru, Bolivia and Chile, which, fortunately, are today practically settled in a most satisfactory and dignified manner.

I have before me the exposition of three problems with which to occupy part of the time I have been assigned in this morning's session. These problems are: (1) The relations between Argentine and Brazil; (2) the problem of Paraguay; (3) the problem of Uruguay.

THE RELATIONS BETWEEN ARGENTINE AND BRAZIL

The origin of the differences between these two countries lies in the ancient rivalry between Portugal and Spain, during the time of South American conquest, which was then evidenced by the frequent conflicts between the

Spaniards and the Portuguese. For the sake of information, it would be well to state that although Spain, at that time, was always successful in her wars with Portugal, very often the latter nation obtained better results after the differences were settled. So the Portuguese diplomacy was pronounced and it is claimed that the Jesuits were expelled from the Spanish possessions by the workings of this diplomacy. It is obvious that this religious order was in fact the advanced army of the Spanish civilization. Therefore, when Brazil saw the light of its independent life it found itself the possessor of an immense amount of land. Argentine received from Spain smaller territorial rights but with them also obtained from the mother country the hereditary hatred of the Spaniards for the Portuguese.

Although, in fact, the actual cause of the trouble lies in the desire of both nations to control the outlet of the River Plate, which is to Argentine, and would be to Brazil, what the Mississippi River is to this country. Many South American statesmen declare that this issue alone is endangering the independence of Uruguay. But the foreign immigration to Argentine, Uruguay and Brazil and the common sense of the peoples of these countries are extinguishing the prejudices of the past and creating, as I said before, a strong current of international trade, all of which, together with equality of military and naval power, both of Argentine and Brazil, are furnishing a most stable guarantee of peace, and a most solid foundation for the development of a permanent friendship between the two nations.

THE PROBLEM OF PARAGUAY

This problem deals rather with the constant internal unrest of the country, due to foreign influence. This situation had its origin in the war of the Triple Alliance. Paraguay was then not divided among the victorious nations, simply because Argentine thought it to be a good policy to keep it as an independent nation, proclaiming to that effect the then famous and well known doctrine "that victory does not entitle to territorial rights." The present result of this

settlement of the war is, as I said, the internal political unrest in Paraguay, as well as in Uruguay. No other example could be given in the history of the world of a more active influence of foreign nations in the internal policies of any country. It has been a known fact for years, that whenever the government of Paraguay is in the hands of a political party agreeable to Argentine, Brazil would help the opposing party morally and financially, allow it to organize its forces in Brazilian territory, and encourage it to overthrow the existing administration. Reverse the circumstances and you will find that a similar process goes on in Argentine with respect to Brazil. But to my knowledge these things have ceased to happen. The South American countries are growing wiser and their present energies are mainly directed to the wonderful development of their inexhaustible natural resources. This is, I think, our greatest blessing, for nations that are busy and intensely preoccupied in the development of their natural resources will never think of diverting their energies and misusing their strength in the ungrateful task of an international war.

The attitude of the United States towards these questions has been, in the past, far from being definite. To my knowledge it has changed with the changes in the administration. Up to recent years, however, the general policy of the government in Washington has been to treat the South American nations in a fashion similar to that employed in dealing with the countries of Central America. A striking example of this occurred only a few years ago in a proposition between Chile and the United States, better known as the Alsop claim. In that instance, the department of state sent out an ultimatum to the ministry of foreign affairs of my country stating that the American representative in Santiago would be called back to Washington should the question not be settled within ten days. At the time no intelligent person in Chile denied the justice of the claim, but the method of procedure was the thing we objected to. Such an instance as this is liable to develop an ill-feeling between North and South America, but fortunately for us this parti-

cular case was satisfactorily settled by arbitration. When these questions of international interest come up in South America, the eyes of the world will always turn to this country to see what it will do, under the circumstances.

As previously stated, I esteem too highly the intelligence and common sense of the Latin-American nations to think that they could not settle their differences without the unwelcome interference of foreign nations. The policy of the present administration, in keeping its hands off Mexico, is commanding the admiration and respect of all the South American continent. Had the United States always proceeded in the same tactful manner, that it is now using with regard to the Mexican situation, there would have been no foundation for the ill-feeling, which to a degree, is still felt in South America towards the United States.

The elimination of misunderstanding between nations is always a most desirable thing. The visits to South America of prominent statesmen, like Hon. Elihu Root, and later of Hon. Wm. J. Bryan, have done much towards the elimination of misunderstandings in the Pan-American continent. Tours of inspection and study of the Latin-American conditions, like the recent tour of the Boston Chamber of Commerce, are also most important factors in eliminating prejudice and modifying the opinions of both American and South American people. The gathering of Pan-American congresses are also doing much towards bringing the nations of the western world into closer touch and last, but not least, the organization of conferences, like the one in which I have the honor of being present, prepare the ground for the thorough understanding by the Latin-American nations of the ideals and purposes of the people of the United States and will hasten the beginning of a second era of genuine American influence in South America.